

Key Principles Related to Early Learning

<i>Principle</i>	<i>Findings</i>	<i>Implications for Practice</i>
High quality early education programs are important for enhancing child outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Participation for children from low-income families enhances developmental outcomes (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2007; Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000) ➤ 2006 Annual Report, 97% of the military's centers meet the professional standards of NAEYC, average rate of accredited centers across US = 8% (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, 2007). ➤ Abbott Preschool program with requirements for class size, teacher-student ratios, and teacher certification = gains for all children (Ainsworth & Laosa, 2007) ➤ Teacher behavior and classroom quality best when teachers have a Bachelor's degree and college specialized early childhood training (Whitebook, 2003); teachers' education, training, and credentialing not sufficient for improving outcomes (Early et al., 2006). ➤ Teachers encourage communication and reasoning, are sensitive to their interactions with children, and construct an atmosphere of respect, encouragement, and enthusiasm for learning = gains for children (Howes et al, 2006). ➤ Most achievement gains when a research-based curriculum is used with web-based professional development to mentor teachers and progress monitoring of children inform practice (Landry, 2005) ➤ Intentional curriculum in reading and math and professional development and supports for teachers are important components of effective programs (Klein & Knitzer, 2007). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intentional curriculum (Klein & Knitzer, 2007): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ content driven, ○ research-based, ○ emphasizes active engagement with children, ○ includes attention to social and regulatory skills, ○ responsive to cultural diversity and English Language learners, ○ fun for young children, ○ promotes positive peer and teacher interactions, ○ developmentally appropriate ➤ Elements of effective center-based programs (Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, 2007): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highly-skilled teachers ○ Small class sizes and high adult/child ratios (see also Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000) ○ Age appropriate curricula and stimulated materials in safe setting ○ Warm, responsive interactions ○ High and consistent levels of child participation ➤ Components that characterize effective childhood care and education services (Burner, Floyd, & Copeman, 2005): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Well educated staff, trained and knowledgeable about child development ○ Caring staff, able to connect with children and families, build on strengths, culturally competent ○ Consistent staff, low staff turnover ○ Supportive and regular supervision of staff, continuous training and development ○ Clear and reachable goals and objectives regarding growth and development, address individual strengths and differences ○ Adequate staffing to provide the duration and intensity of involvement ○ Child and family focus, family involvement within and beyond specific program ○ Comprehensive approaches ○ Systematic monitoring and evaluation to improve practice
Teacher professional development impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Professional development for teachers relates to quality of early childhood program and quality predicts child 	

classroom/program quality	<p>developmental outcomes (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Highly effective programs actively engage teachers and provide high-quality supervision (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000) 	
Effective communication between home and school is important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Overemphasis on “parents as learners” neglects parents’ role as decision makers; parents make the following decisions (Mendoza, Katz, Robertson, & Rothenberg, 2003) : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What “school readiness means for their children (Graue, 1993) ○ How they will support a child’s development and education (Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995) ○ What information and other resources they will seek (Marden & Nicholas, 1997; Nicholas & Marden, 1998; Morisset, 1994; Dervin, Harping, & Foreman-Wernet, 1999) ○ What information and other resources they will make available to program staff ○ Their preferred means of communicating with staff ○ What use they will make of resources offered (Pillow, 2000; Dervin, Harping, & Foreman-Wernet, 1999; McInnis-Dittrich, 1996) ○ Whether they will become involved in a child’s intervention, child care, or education program, and in what ways (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994) ○ What to do when their goals for their child or family differ from those of the program (Soodak & Erwin, 2000; Ray, Rubenstein, & Russo, 1994; Ames & Ellsworth, 1997) ○ What to do when dissatisfied with their relationships with program staff (Quintero, 1998; Delgado-Gaitan, 1996, 2001; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Ames & Ellsworth, 1997) ➤ Positive transitions from preschool to kindergarten are promoted by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connection between the preschool and kindergarten that allows kindergarten teachers to plan for new students and allows students to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recommendations for good practice in parent-program communications (Mendoza, Katz, Robertson, & Rothenberg, 2003): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convey mutual trust and respect ○ Maintain regular, two-way, meaningful comm. between home and school ○ Focus on comm. that is “good for the child” ○ Recognize the importance of partnerships between parents and programs ○ Use a variety of connecting methods (notices, phone calls, conferences, etc.) ○ Recognize and work to overcome potential barriers to communication ○ Become familiar with the information needs and patterns of information seeking and use in the community served

	<p>know what to expect,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Strong home-school connection, and ○ Connection between schools and community resources (Child Trends, 2001) 	
The quality of the home-environment (parental involvement) is strongly related to early learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The quality of the home environment (toys, activities, and interactions) is strongly related to early cognitive and language development, performance on IQ testing, and later school achievement (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2004). ➤ Family environment enrichment programs show long-term outcomes (i.e., higher achievement test scores at age 40; Heckman, 2006) ➤ Adverse early environments are related to slowdown in growth of labor force quality, increasing high school drop out rates, and increasing crime rates (Heckman, 2006) 	
The roots of language, literacy, and school achievement are embedded in linguistic and social exchanges very early in life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents who read and talk with children have children with more developed cognitive and motor competencies; talking and book reading improve development regardless of language; development in first language is important for later English abilities for English language learners (Barreuco, Feinauer, Lopez, & Miles, 2007) ➤ Interactions and communications children have with their caretakers in the earliest years of life strongly influence later school achievement and literacy (Brice-Heath, 1986; Auerbach, 1989; Snow, 1988, 1991; Tomasello & Farrar, 1986) ➤ Frequency and quality of words a child hears during her first three years of life are critically important in shaping language development (Hart & Risley, 1995) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Children in professional families hear approximately 11 million words per year, children in working class families hear approximately 6 million words, children in welfare families hear approximately 3 million words annually 	
<i>Promising Program/Strategies</i>	<i>Demonstrated Outcomes</i>	<i>Implications for Practice</i>
Home visitation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased early literacy skills in toddler participants, higher rates of high school graduation, stronger school performance long-term, enhanced child development, marked improvement in educational outcomes and adult earnings (for children exposed to high-quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Connections with other services is essential; ➤ Participants enrolled during pregnancy show stronger parenting outcomes; ➤ Nurses more effective than paraprofessionals in intervention efforts (Daro, 2006)

<p>*Parents as Teachers (PAT)</p> <p>*Parent Child Home Program (PCHP)</p> <p>*Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)</p>	<p>intervention; Daro, 2006)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeting low-income families results in greatest overall benefit; families in very highest –risk categories get least benefit (Klein & Weiss, 2006) ➤ Significantly higher levels of cognitive development for low SES intervention children (Klein & Weiss, 2006) ➤ Higher rates of graduation and increase in school readiness (Klein & Weiss, 2006) ➤ Children performing at or above age level, parents spending more time reading, talking about books, and teaching alphabet, parents have more knowledge on way children grow and learn (Klein & Weiss, 2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Key factors of programs likely to meet expectations (Home Visit Forum): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Internal consistency linking specific program elements to outcomes ○ Well trained staff with high quality supervision ○ Sound organization capacity ○ Links to other community support and resources ○ Consistent implementation of program components ○ Modest program expectations as quality can suffer when widely produced ○ Planning for complementary changes that need to occur in major institutions (health services, public education) (Daro, 2006)
The Carolina Abecedarian Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At 18 months-5 years, higher mental & motor test scores, follow up at 12 & 15 years continue to have higher scores; ➤ Significantly higher reading and math from primary school through mid-adolescence; higher mental test scores from infancy through 21 y.o. ~ enhanced language development mediated this result; ➤ 40% of tx children were in school at age 21 compared to 20% for control group; ➤ 35% of tx group in or attended four-year college compared to 14% for control group; ➤ On average, tx children were a year older at the birth of their first child (FPG Child Development Institute, n.d.) ➤ By 15, twice as many children in control placed in special education, only 30 % of intervention children repeated grade in school (56% control group); ➤ Test scores below ave. for both groups and dropped over time, children in tx group approx. 5% points higher than control through age 21, gap in I.Q. fell from 17 points at 3 y.o. to 5 points by 21 y.o. (Wilgoren, 1999) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Low adult-child ratios; ➤ Stable, professional staff with qualifications akin to teachers in public schools; ➤ Series of 200 simple games focused on language development, starting with visual stimulus for infants and leading to scavenger hunts and mazes for toddlers; ➤ Learning games are integrated into a high-stimulus day of art projects and playground visits, hardly distinguishable from good adult-child interaction (Wilgoren, 1999)
Chicago Parent-Child Center (Dr. Arthur Reynolds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children in program did better academically, less likely to drop out of high school, less likely to be arrested and less likely to repeat grades or be placed in special education services 	
High/Scope Perry Preschool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adults at age 40 who participated in prog. had higher 	

	earnings, more likely to graduate high school, more likely to hold a job and commit fewer crimes	
AVANCE Family Support and Education Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ More organized, stimulating, and responsive home environment; developmentally appropriate toys; positive interactions with their children; and positive parenting practices (praise, teaching, verbalizing) when assessed following the intervention and again 1 year later; ➤ Parents also were more likely to pursue and attain higher education (AVANCE, 2007) 	
Educare		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Each classroom has a teacher with a bachelor's degree, an assistant teacher with an associate's degree, and teacher's aide with a high school diploma; ➤ All have completed coursework in early childhood education; ➤ A Master Teacher provides on-site supervision, mentoring, and training; ➤ Family support specialists available on-site to develop individualized support plans for families with additional challenges; ➤ Special attention to continuity of care, keeping children with same peer group and caregivers for several years supporting healthy, secure relationships (Atfeld, 2003; Dealy, n.d.)
Fast Track	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased involvement in learning at home and school, reduced harsh discipline practices; ➤ Reduced special education referrals; ➤ Increased language arts and reading skills (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Early Risers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased social competence and basic reading skills; reduced self-regulation problems (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Families and Schools Together (FAST)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased academic competence and social skills, reduced special education referrals and childhood anxiety and aggression (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Incredible Years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased use of prosocial conflict management strategies and play skills; ➤ Increased school readiness (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Early Head Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children who had year or more performed significantly better on measures of cognitive, language, and social-emotional dev. (Love et al., 2001, 2002, 2005; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for Children and Families Office of Planning Research and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Effects found primarily in programs that used combo of center- and home-based services (Love et al., 2001, 2002, 2005; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services for Children and Families Office of Planning Research and Evaluation, 2001)

	Evaluation, 2001)	
Positive Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased parent-child communication and knowledge of child's contacts and other parents and participation in school activities; ➤ Increased academic achievement scores and reduced absenteeism (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Project Achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased control of children and knowledge of classroom curriculum, improved relationships with children; ➤ Increased academic achievement scores, and grade retention (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
SAFE Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved monitoring of skills and involvement in child's learning and development ➤ Increased academic achievement scores (Caspe & Lopez, 2006) 	
Authors Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increased literacy practices in child care centers and increasing language and literacy scores of 3 and 4 year olds 	
Raising a Reader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improves kindergarten readiness skills of book knowledge, story comprehension, and print knowledge 	
Project CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improved child cognitive development outcomes (Wasik et al., 1990) 	